In the Claims

1.   (Original) An automated method of remotely activating options resident on a device comprising the steps of:

generating an activation key configured to activate an option resident in a memory of an in-field device;

selecting a verification script to at least confirm enableability of the option in the in-field device;

sending the activation key and the verification script to the in-field device wherein the in-field device is capable of executing the verification script;

receiving a report from the in-field device; and

if the report is satisfactory, installing the activation key in the in-field device whereby the option is activated and if the report is not satisfactory, aborting activation of the option.

2.   (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of generating the activation key to be unique to the in-field device.

3.   (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of bundling the activation key and the verification script together and wherein the step of sending the activation key and the verification script to the in-field device includes sending the bundle.

4.   (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of selecting the verification script such that the report is automatically generated when executed by the in-field device.

5.   (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein the step of selecting includes selecting the verification script to provide the report including at least one of:

options currently active;

options supported by the in-field device; and

dependencies of options supported by the in-field device.

6.   (Original)   The method of claim 5 further comprising the step of determining, from the report, whether the option to be activated is one of currently active, not supported by the in-field device, and requires dependent activations and, if the determination is positive, deeming the report unsatisfactory.

7.   (Original)   The method of claim 6 further comprising the step of sending a message prompting contact with a centralized facility if the report is unsatisfactory.

8.   (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of monitoring use of the option and providing a warning of an expiration of the activation key.

9.   (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of generating the activation key upon receiving an access request from the in-field device at a centralized facility.

10.   (Original)   The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of receiving a system ID as part of the access request, wherein the system ID is a unique identifier of a customer initiating the access request.

11.   (Original)   The method of claim 10 further comprising the step of verifying whether the access request and system ID are valid.

12.   (Original)   The method of claim 1 wherein the in-field device is configured for medical imaging.

13.   (Original) A system to respond to a request to remotely enable an option resident on an in-field device, the system comprising:

a centralized facility located remotely from an in-field device having an inactive option, and the centralized facility having at least one access computer programmed to:

select a verification script to check that the in-field device is in condition to activate the inactive option;

send the verification script to the in-field device wherein the in-field device is capable of executing the verification script; and

install an activation key in the in-field device to activate the inactive option if the verification script indicates that the in-field device is in condition to activate the inactive option.

14. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the computer is further programmed to generate an activation key upon receipt of an access request from the in-field device.

15. (Original) The system of claim 14 wherein the activation key is based upon a unique host ID received from the in-field device.

16. (Original) The system of claim 15 wherein the computer is further programmed to electronically transmit the activation key to the in-field device to active the inactive option.

17. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the in-field device is in condition to activate the inactive option if the in-field device supports the inactive option and dependent configuration is unnecessary to activate the inactive option.

18. (Original) The system of claim 17 wherein the computer is further programmed to receive a report automatically generated by the verification script from the in-field device indicating whether the in-field device supports the inactive option and whether dependent configuration is necessary to activate the inactive option.

19. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the computer is further programmed to send a notification to contact the centralized facility if the in-field device is not in condition to activate the inactive option.

20. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the in-field device is a medical imaging device.

21. (Previously Presented) A system to remotely enable an option resident on an in-field device, the system comprising:

an in-field device located remotely from a centralized facility and comprising a computer programmed to:

send an access request to the centralized facility to request activation of an option of the in-field device;

receive an activation key uniquely configured to activate the option of the in-field device and a verification script to authenticate a current status of the in-field device;

send a report generated by the verification script to the centralized facility indicating the current status of the in-field device; and

install the activation key to activate the option if the current status of the in-field device is determined to be satisfactory by the centralized facility.

22.   (Original) The system of claim 21 wherein the activation key is based upon a host ID unique to the in-field device.

23.   (Original) The system of claim 21 wherein a message prompting communication with the centralized facility is sent to the in-field device if the current status of the in-field device is unsatisfactory.

24.   (Original) The system of claim 23 wherein the current status of the in-field device is unsatisfactory if the report indicates that at least one of: the option is currently active, the in-field device does not support the option, and absent dependencies preclude activation of the option.

25.   (Original)   The system of claim 21 wherein the activation key and the verification script are received as a bundle.

26.   (Original) The system of claim 25 wherein the bundle is compressed.

27.   (Original)   The system of claim 21 wherein the in-field device is a medical imaging device.

28.   (Original) The system of claim 21 wherein the report includes at least one of:
options currently active;
options supported by the in-field device; and
dependencies of options supported by the in-field device.

29.   (Original) The system of claim 21 wherein the in-field device is determined to be satisfactory if the option is enableable in the in-field device.